

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-RS-D-24-11

Issued at Sitka, Friday, August, 5 2011

Effective 11:59 P.M. Friday
Date: August 5, 2011

Expiration Date: 11:59 P.M. Saturday,
December 31, 2011 Unless superseded by a
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION: This emergency order prohibits the possession and retention of sockeye salmon in all marine waters west of a line between the commercial fishery regulatory markers at the entrance of Falls Lake Bay and the Falls Lake drainage. Sockeye salmon may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION: The provisions of 5 AAC 47.021. (g)(6) and 5 AAC 47.023. (g)(12) are added by this emergency order.

5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of Southeast Alaska Area.

(g) In the Sitka vicinity:

(6) in the waters of Falls Lake Bay west of a line between the commercial fishery regulatory markers at the entrance of Falls Lake Bay, sockeye salmon may not be retained or possessed. Sockeye salmon may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

5 AAC 47.023. Special Provisions for waters; seasons; bag, possession, and size limits, and method and means for the fresh waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.

(g) In the Sitka vicinity

(12) In the Falls Lake drainage, sockeye salmon may not be retained or possessed. Sockeye salmon may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Troy Tydingco
Sitka Area Management Biologist
Division of Sport Fish

JUSTIFICATION:

Sockeye salmon escapement at Falls Lake has been counted through a weir since July 5, 2011. Through August 3, a total of 202 sockeye salmon have been counted through the trap. Historically, 40% of the sockeye entering Falls Lake pass through the trap resulting in an estimated total escapement, to date, of 500 sockeye salmon. This estimate, represents about 65% of the expected escapement. The 10-year average escapement in Falls Lake is 3,000 sockeye salmon. Because of the low projected escapement, a prohibition on the retention and possession of sockeye salmon is necessary to protect the Falls Lake sockeye population. Action is also being taken to close the subsistence fishery at Falls Bay.

The Department prohibits the possession and retention of select species instead of closing a sport fishery for that species when terminal gear used and/or fishing techniques for that species are the same or similar to that used for other species present that have no conservation issues to ensure the restriction is enforceable. Since the gear and techniques used for sockeye salmon are similar to that used for other species present in Falls Lake Bay and drainage for which there are no conservation issues, a prohibition on the retention and possession of sockeye salmon is enforceable. Therefore the department is prohibiting the retention and possession of sockeye salmon in part of Falls Lake Bay and the Falls Lake drainage.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P. O. Box 240020, Douglas, AK 99824, (907)465-4270, and at the Sitka Area Office, 304 Lake Street, Sitka, AK 99835, (907)747-5355.